

Helpful Tips for Controlling Triggers Outside

1 | Identify triggers Understanding asthma triggers is an essential part of asthma management. In fact, identifying your personal triggers is the first step in gaining asthma control. Try to find the specific triggers or causes of your asthma, and then plan to avoid these triggers and have better asthma control. If exposure isn't controlled, triggers can cause severe flare-ups, chronic symptoms between flare-ups, and even reduced lung function.

2 | Count the Pollen. Pollen is a common trigger of asthma. Pollen can trigger asthma symptoms such as wheeze, cough, chest tightness, and difficulty breathing. Check the pollen count for Utah at: <http://www.intermountainallergy.com/pollen.html>

3 | Check air quality. Air pollution can make asthma symptoms worse and trigger attacks. Get to know how sensitive you are to air pollution. Notice your asthma symptoms when you are physically active. Do they happen more often when the air pollution is bad? Also, notice any asthma symptoms that begin up to a day after you have been outdoors in polluted air. Air pollution can make you more sensitive to asthma triggers like mold and dust mites. If you are more sensitive than usual to indoor asthma triggers, it could be due to air pollution outdoors. Utah's air quality is available at: <http://www.airquality.utah.gov/>

4 | Exercising with asthma. Make a habit of warming up and cooling down for at least 15 minutes before and after exercise. Avoid exercising outdoors in extremely cold temperatures, when pollen levels are high, or when air quality is poor. Using a short-acting bronchodilator 15 minutes before exercise might also help prevent symptoms. Keep your medication with you when you are exercising.

5 | Cold weather action. Cold air entering the lungs can cause airway constriction and is therefore a common trigger. To help manage asthma in cold weather, consider these following tips:

- Keep your asthma well controlled at all times and carry your prescribed reliever medication with you.
- If cold air is a trigger for you, take your reliever medication 10–15 minutes before exposure to cold air. Avoid outdoor exercise in extremely cold weather.
- A scarf that covers both your nose and mouth will help keep the air you breathe warm and moist.

6 | Get a flu shot. Respiratory infections like the flu are more serious in patients with asthma, and such infections can often lead to pneumonia and acute respiratory disease.

7 | Choose smoke-free venues. People with asthma have sensitive airways. Smoke is a powerful trigger, and can bring on an asthma attack even outdoors.

8 | Do your part to improve air quality. There are many things we can do collectively to help improve both indoor and outdoor air quality. Check out this Web Site to find out what you can do: <http://www.cleanair.utah.gov/>